



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Friday January 06, 2006 -- 05-061
District: District 2 - Redding
Contact: Michael Mayor
Phone: (530) 225-3214

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans Weathers the Storm

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 2 continues cleanup and repairs after a series of storms passed through the north state this holiday weekend. Crews worked around the clock, beginning December 30, 2005 clearing debris from storm drains, plowing snow and removing hundreds of yards of mud, rock and trees from multiple slides throughout the counties of Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity.

In response to storm damage Caltrans activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at approximately 4:00 pm on Friday December 30, 2005. The EOC is the command central point for all major incidents, such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks and other emergencies affecting the operations of state highways in District 2. The District Traffic Management Center (TMC), Dispatch, Field Maintenance, Maintenance Engineering and other support staff worked 24 hours a day coordinating efforts with local, state, and federal agencies to repair, restore and maintain levels of service on state highway facilities.

The local Caltrans office awarded \$4.7 million worth of emergency contracts just to re-open area highways, with expectations of multi-million dollar contracts to fully restore damaged facilities. Field Maintenance crews throughout District 2 clocked in more than 3,600 hours of overtime, with a cost to date, (01/05/06) of \$244,000 for personnel, equipment and materials related to storm activities.

Areas heavily hit were the Feather River Canyon in Butte and Plumas Counties, where localized flooding, roadway debris and rock and mudslides closed State Route (SR) 70. Estimates of \$5 - \$7 million to restore the highway are foreseeable. The highway opened to one-way traffic control at 12:30 pm January 4, 2006 but has periodically closed due to additional rockslides. Motorists can expect 45-60 minute delays.

State Route 96 through the Klamath River Canyon in Siskiyou County sustained substantial damage due to clogged culverts or upstream debris diverting water away from culverts. Portions of the highway were lost due to erosion, or were blocked by debris. Numerous slides and slip outs along the SR 96 caused closures for the better part of the weekend. A \$1.5 million emergency contract is underway and the road is open to local traffic only.

There were several closures on SR 299 West during the weekend, including a twelve-hour closure near Del Loma due to rockslides. Access to Eureka via US 101 was temporarily cut off due to a major slide south of the City and high winds and flooding to the north. Caltrans crews battled to keep SR 299 open to prevent Eureka from being cut off from goods and services. Contractors are currently scaling loose rock, cleaning fallen rock from the roadway and monitoring hazardous areas along seven miles of the project limits.

Elsewhere in the District, SR 395 in Lassen County had two feet of floodwaters top the highway causing closures and detours on Saturday December 31, 2005. Damage was limited largely to pavement. In Shasta County, SR 273 had two feet of water covering the roadway as Olney Creek reached flood level. On Interstate 5, contractors continue to remove slide material immediately adjacent to the Bridge Bay Interchange near the Pit River Bridge.

For information on road conditions, and chain controls go to <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/>

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NOTE: An electronic version of this news release is available on the Internet at the following web address: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/news_releases.htm

